



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

**TODD P. GRAVES**

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Contact Don Ledford, Public Affairs • (816) 426-4220 • 400 East Ninth Street, Room 5510 • Kansas City, MO 64106

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **PUBLIC HOUSING SAFETY INITIATIVE RESULTS IN CHARGES AGAINST TWO KC MEN**

**KANSAS CITY, Mo.** – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a new law enforcement partnership has resulted in two Kansas City, Mo., men being indicted by federal grand jury today, in separate and unrelated cases, for possessing with intent to distribute crack cocaine.

The indictments, Graves said, are a result of the Public Housing Safety Initiative, an effort by the U.S. Departments of Justice and Housing and Urban Development to assist in the investigation, prosecution and prevention of violent crimes and drug offenses in public, federally assisted housing areas.

The Kansas City metropolitan area is one of 10 communities nationwide selected for the new initiative, which will focus on reducing crime in targeted public housing areas, improving tenant conditions and improving interagency collaboration and communication on quality-of-life issues in public housing areas.

“The residents of these communities have a right to a safe and drug-free environment,” Graves said. “The creation of safe, federally-assisted housing areas is a priority of the Department of Justice and I expect this collaborative effort will improve the quality of life in these communities.”

The Public Housing Safety Initiative provides \$400,000 in federal funding to train police officers and crime analysts, improve surveillance in public housing areas, increase the number of sweeps conducted in these areas, target criminals residing in public housing areas, increase drug enforcement, improve investigations and coordinate and cooperate with probation and parole efforts.

Specifically, a portion of the funding is earmarked for the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Independence, Mo., Police Department. Additionally, the federal initiative

funded the hiring of a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney to prosecute crimes occurring within federally-assisted housing areas.

The following two defendants were charged today:

\* **Kevin D. Howard**, 48, of Kansas City, was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with possessing with intent to distribute crack cocaine.

The federal indictment alleges that **Howard** possessed with intent to distribute five grams or more of crack cocaine on Aug. 11, 2005.

\* **Eric J. Byrd**, 18, of Kansas City, was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with possessing with intent to distribute crack cocaine.

The federal indictment alleges that **Byrd** possessed with intent to distribute crack cocaine on July 24, 2005.

These cases are being prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Matthew P. Wolesky. They were investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department.

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This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

[www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow)